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JURY INDICTS TRUMP IN CRIMINAL CASE, SETBACK FOR HIS PREZ RACE

A grand jury on Thursday voted to indict the former US president for paying porn star Stormy Daniels to buy her silence over an alleged affair

DON ALLEGEDLY PAID $130,000 HUSH MONEY

Daniels claimed she had a sexual encounter with Trump at a Lake Tahoe hotel in 2006. Trump's former attorney Michael Cohen reportedly paid her $130,000 a month before the 2016 election in exchange for her silence about the alleged affair. Hush money payment isn't illegal in the US. Trump is being charged with falsifying business records to make the payment | P12

EXPECTED TO BE ARRAIGNED ON TUESDAY

- The US president from 2017 to 2021 is expected to fly from his home in Florida to New York on Monday and be arraigned in court on Tuesday
- The indictment remains under seal and it is not clear what crimes and how many criminal counts Trump has been charged with
- With this, Trump becomes the first ex-US prez to face criminal charges

30

TRUMP FACES THAT MANY COUNTS RELATED TO BUSINESS FRAUD, ACCORDING TO CNN

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4 GANGRAPE B'LURU WOMAN IN MOVING CAR FOR OVER 5 HRS

Victim was allegedly smoking with her male friend in a park attached to National Games Village, when she was reportedly abducted in the car by the accused

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a horrifying incident that cast a shadow on the image of Bengaluru being one of the safest cities in the country for women, a 19-year-old woman was allegedly kidnapped and gang-raped by four men in a moving car for five-and-a-half-hours. The incident took place in the Koramangala police station limits on March 25 night. Four have been arrested.

The police said the woman, who works with a private company, was smoking with her male friend in a park attached to National Games Village, which has residential complexes that house several judges and top bureaucrats, around 9.30 pm on March 25.

Meanwhile, one of the accused, who reportedly knew the victim's friend, approached them and objected to them sitting in the park at night and smoking. The victim and her friend told him that it was none of his business.

But then a shocking thing happened. "The friend told the victim that he needed to go home and left, even as the accused was standing there and making phone calls. In a few minutes, three others came to the park, forcibly dragged the woman into the car and abducted her. Via Domlur, they drove to Attibele on Hosur Road and made a U-turn before the checkpost and left the woman near her house in Ejipura around 3.30 am. While the car was on the move, the accused allegedly raped the woman," DCP (South-East division) CK Baba told reporters.

The victim, who managed to contact her mother, reached a hospital with her help and filed a complaint against the four youth the next day. "Within eight hours after the case was registered, all the four accused were secured. We are waiting for the medical reports. More details can't be shared as investigation is still on," the DCP said. He added that the victim was familiar with the faces of the accused, but was not acquainted with them.

The accused have been identified as Satish, Vijay, Sridhar and Kiran, all residents of Ejipura and surrounding areas in Bengaluru, and aged 23-24. Two of the accused work as office boys, one is an electrician and another is employed with a BPO.

CONTINUED ON: P3

More cash in your pocket as small savings rates increased

SACHIN KUMAR @ Mumbai

IN a move that could bring cheer to individual investors reeling under high inflation, the Centre on Friday raised the interest rates on most small savings schemes by 10-70 bps for the April-June quarter.

After the revision, the rates on these savings schemes now range from 4% to 8.2%. The government's decision to hike rates reflects the hardening of interest rates in the economy.

The highest hike is seen in the National Savings Certificate, which will now attract a decent 7.7%, up from 7% earlier, for the April 1-June 30, 2023 period. The rate for the popular girl child savings scheme, Sukanya Samriddhi, has been increased to 8% from 7.6%.

The new rate for Senior Citizen Savings Scheme — its maximum investment limit has been raised to ₹30 lakh from ₹15 lakh — and Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) is 8.2% (8% before) and 7.6% (7.2%), respectively. KVP will now mature in 115 months against 120 months earlier.

After the revision, the one-year term deposit with post offices would earn 6.8%, up from 6.6% before, the two-year deposit will offer 6.9% (6.8%), three-year deposit will give 7% (6.9%) and five-year deposit will offer 7.5% interest compared to 7% earlier. The rate for Public Provident Fund has been retained at 7.1% and that of the savings deposit at 4%, while the rates of Post Office Monthly Income Scheme has been raised by 30 bps to 7.4%. The monthly scheme's maximum deposit limit has been enhanced to ₹9 lakh from ₹4 lakh for single account holders.

The finance ministry also notified Mahila Samman Savings Certificate — a new savings scheme for women which will offer 7.5% interest rate.

The government reviews the interest rates on small savings schemes every quarter and this is the third time in the past nine months that the ministry has hiked the rates for these instruments.

The latest hike was on expected lines as interest rates have moved up in the broader economy over the past few months. The Reserve Bank of India has raised its repo rate by 250 bps since May 2022 in a bid to tame inflation, which remains about its comfort zone of comfort zone of 6%.

INCENTIVISING SMALL SAVINGS

Instrument	Existing rate	New rate
Savings deposit	4%	4%
1-year term deposit	6.6%	6.8%
2-year term deposit	6.8%	6.9%
3-year term deposit	6.9%	7%
5-year term deposit	7%	7.5%
5-year recurring deposit	5.8%	6.2%
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	8%	8.2%
Monthly Income Account Scheme	7.1%	7.4%
National Savings Certificate	7%	7.7%
Public Provident Fund Scheme	7.1%	7.1%
Kisan Vikas Patra	7.2%	7.5%
Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme	7.6%	8%

Guj HC quashes order on PM's degree, fines Kejri

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE Gujarat High Court on Friday quashed a seven-year-old order of the Central Information Commission (CIC), directing the Gujarat University to provide information on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's degree to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Justice Biren Vaishnav also slapped a cost of ₹25,000 on Kejriwal and refused to stay the order despite a request by his lawyer Percy Kavina. The Aam Aadmi Party later said it would appeal against the order.

The court said the CIC was well aware that it was a fishing and roving enquiry, since it did not specify any time limit for compliance. Yet, it chose to pass the order.

Despite the degree in question being put on the website of the University "and despite this fact being made expressly clear" before the court during the hearing, Kejriwal persisted with the matter, one reason why the cost was imposed on him, the judge reasoned.

In April 2016, the then CIC M Sridhar Acharyulu had directed the Delhi University and the Gujarat University to provide information to Kejriwal on Modi's degrees. Three months later, the Gujarat High Court stayed the CIC order after the University filed an appeal.

The then CIC based his directive on a letter Kejriwal wrote to him seeking information.

Modi's postgraduation became a subject of interest as it was initially claimed he had completed his MA in Entire Political Science in 1983 with 62.3% as an external student of Gujarat University. The prefix 'Entire' for Political Science was what was curious.

Reacting to the verdict, Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi, "Doesn't the country even have the right to know how much the PM has studied?"

The BJP hit back with its spokesperson Sambit Patra saying, "What Kejriwal is doing reflects his frustration."

EXPRESS READ

India comes out with new foreign trade policy

New Delhi: India on Friday came out with a "dynamic and responsive" foreign trade policy aiming to push rupee trade, increase outward shipments to $2 trillion by 2030, and promote e-commerce exports, amid global uncertainties. The approach of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 is to move from 'incentive to remission' based regime, encourage collaboration between exporters, states, districts and Indian Missions, reduce transaction cost, and develop more export hubs.

GILL GUJARAT'S TITAN

Shubman Gill scored 63 off 36 balls to guide Gujarat Titans to a five-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings in the first IPL match of the season in Ahmedabad on Friday. Opener Ruturaj Gaikwad's 50-ball 92 had helped CSK to 178 for 7 in 20 overs | PTI | P15

HAL logs highest-ever revenue of ₹26,500 cr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

HINDUSTAN Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has registered the highest-ever revenue of around Rs 26,500 crore (provisional and unaudited) for FY2022-23 as against Rs 24,620 crore of previous year.

In a release on Friday, CB Ananthakrishnan, CMD, said HAL recorded a revenue growth of 8% during the year compared to 2021-22. "Despite the supply chain disruptions due to geo-political situations, the company could achieve the targeted growth. This was possible with the increased thrust on indigenisation and with the available inventory," he added.

He said the order book stood at Rs. 82,000 crore at the end of March 2023 after liquidation of supplies during 2022-23.

"During the year, fresh contracts worth Rs 26,000 crore were received, which included manufacturing contracts for 70 HTT-40, 6 Do-228 Aircraft, and PSLV launch vehicles. In addition, on the ROH front, a fresh order to the tune of Rs 16,600 crore was received," the release stated.

Considering the performance, the company paid an interim dividend of Rs 40 per share during the current financial year, representing 400% on the face value of Rs 10 per share, the statement said.

SIDHU LIKELY TO WALK OUT OF PRISON TODAY

Cong leader Navjot Singh Sidhu, currently serving a one-year RI term in a 1988 road rage case, is set to walk free on Saturday, according to his lawyer

Security personnel cordon off an area after clashes between two groups during a Ramanavami procession the previous day, in Howrah on Friday | PTI

Fresh violence in Howrah; month-old plot, says Mamata

PRONAB MONDAL @ Kolkata

FRESH brick-batting was reported in Howrah's Shibpur area on Friday, a day after violence and arson broke out there during a Ramanavami procession. At least three police personnel were reported injured in the stoning.

The situation was brought under control after a police lathi-charge. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC were imposed and a contingent of the Rapid Action Force was deployed in the area.

Concerned over the situation, Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose, who had earlier taken up the matter with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

In all, 45 people have been arrested. The violence also led to political sparring.

Mamata alleged that the route of Thursday's procession was deliberately changed to target a minority community-dominated pocket. She blamed the violence on the BJP, Bajrang Dal and other affiliated outfits. Appealing to the people to maintain peace, Mamata said, "The conspiracy behind Thursday's violence was hatched a month ago. The was no permission to take the procession through the area where the incident took place. The route was changed deliberately. It was part of the conspiracy."

BJP MLA and leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari went to Shibpur on Friday and submitted a CD to the office of the superintendent of police demanding immediate arrest of the culprits.

Adhikari alleged that the police stood as mute spectators when the procession was attacked.

Expressway toll hiked: Pay ₹30 more from today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

MOTORISTS using the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway will have to pay Rs 30 more for a single journey from April 1.

On the directions of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has revised the toll rates. NHAI officials say this is part of the annual revision done across the country.

As per the directions, a car/jeep/van will have to pay Rs 165 for a single journey instead of Rs 135 and Rs 250 for return journey.

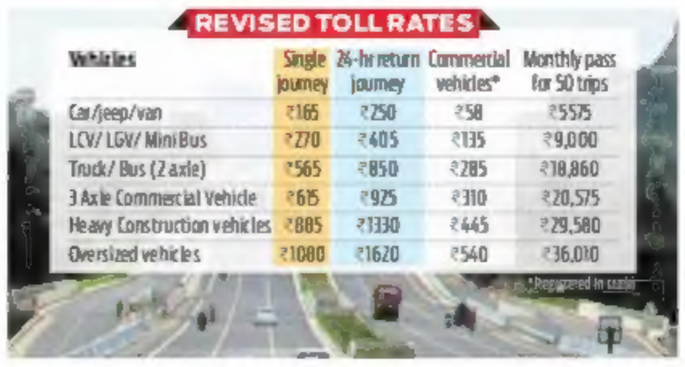
As per the NHAI order issued on March 27, motorists have to pay the revised rates from April 1 at Kaniminike and Sheshagiri Halli toll plaza for six-lane Bengaluru-Niddaghatta section.

The toll was introduced on March 14 after PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the expressway on March 12.

Many motorists and leaders of some political parties have been opposing the high toll rates and lack of service roads since then. Moreover, within a few days of introduction of the toll, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) hiked its bus fares by including the toll fee.

CONTINUED ON: P5

REVISED TOLL RATES



Vehicles	Single journey	24-hr return journey	Commercial vehicles*	Monthly pass for 50 trips
Car/jeep/van	₹165	₹250	₹58	₹5575
LCV/ LGV/ Mini Bus	₹270	₹405	₹135	₹9,000
Truck/ Bus (2 axle)	₹565	₹850	₹285	₹18,860
3 Axle Commercial Vehicle	₹615	₹925	₹310	₹20,575
Heavy Construction vehicles	₹885	₹1330	₹445	₹29,580
Oversized vehicles	₹1080	₹1620	₹540	₹36,010

*Registered in state

NEW TREND

Parties using food aggregators, kids to reach freebies?

KARTHIK KK @ Mysuru

WITH the model code of conduct coming into force and the Election Commission deploying flying squads and police personnel to stop supply of liquor, cash, gifts and other goodies to voters ahead of Assembly elections in the state, political parties and candidates are finding innovative ways to hoodwink the authorities.

Candidates in rural areas are planning to use schoolchildren, who are now on summer vacation, for campaigning and distributing cash and freebies to people to vote in their favour.

"This was tried during the gram panchayat elections in Mysuru district several months ago, where children as young as 10 were given the task of handing over Rs 500 to each person of a family. In return, the children were also paid handsomely for their services. Realising that children would not be caught by police or other authorities, leaders of various parties in villages are planning to misuse them again this time," said a government school teacher.

This was not restricted just to Mysuru district, politicians in the Old Mysore region, including Mandya and Chamarajanagar districts, used schoolchildren for "election duty".

"Agents of politicians pay children Rs 100 for supplying liquor and money to voters in villages," Chikkanna, a resident of Gundlupet, said.

Politicians in urban areas have found a new way to reach the goodies safely to voters at their doorstep.

They are planning to make use of food aggregators and delivery apps, pick-up-and-drop service providers to reach gifts and goodies to voters as election authorities usually do not keep a watch on food delivery executives.

CONTINUED ON: P4